SOUTH VIET NAM In Struggle

7th Year – *September 3rd, 1973*

No 213

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CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE SOUTH VIET NAM NATIONAL FRONT FOR LIBERATION

NFL AND PRG AUGUST REVOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE DAY APPEAL :

"To maintain a lasting peace, realize national concord, achieve independence and democracy"

Dear fellow-countrymen and combatants,

The Paris Agreement on Viet Nam has opened to our people a new stage of struggle for an enduring peace, national concord, better living conditions, complete independence, democracy and eventual peaceful reunification of the country. In a spirit of national reconciliation and concord let us strive to strengthen solidarity and fight resolutely for a thorough and strict implementation of the Paris Agreement with a view to genuine peace, genuine independence and democracy. Let us exert every effort to heal war wounds, restore life to normal, rehabilitate and develop our economy so as to make the liberated zone stronger with each passing day in every respect in our advance toward a peaceful, independent, democratic and prosperous South Viet Nam pending national reunification by peaceful means.

Peace, independence, democracy and welfare are our people's priorities. The National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam emphatically declare their readiness to continue to respect and strictly implement all the provisions of the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam in order to meet at any cost those deep and urgent aspirations, and insist that the US and the Saigon administration do the same.

Unity is strength and a fine tradition of our people. Further close your ranks under the patriotic and glorious banner of the National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government, march forward with enthusiasm and bring our sacred revolutionary cause to total victory.

National concord is an overriding policy of the National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government. Unless they achieve it South Viet Nam cannot solve its internal political problems, preserve peace, complete independence and ensure democracy. The PRG is prepared to cooperate with anyone willing to contribute to peace, independence, democracy and national concord. For the sake of our entire people, for the future of our country, let us end all hatred and enmity and together mould a new life of welfare and happiness.

The third political force is a reality that no one can obliterate. With the spirit of national reconciliation and concord every political problem of South Viet Nam should be solved on the basis of the existence of two administrations, two armies and three political forces. The NFL and the PRG call on all organizations and individuals of the third force to bring their role into play and join efforts with the people in order to achieve national concord, preserve peace, complete independence and ensure democracy.

Dear fellow-countrymen and fighters,

This year we commemorate the August Revolution and the Independence Day at a moment when our people have won a historic victory over the US aggressors. Nevertheless, owing to the perfidy and frenzy of the United States and its agents who have gravely violated the Paris Agreement and the Joint Communiqué, our people must keep up their struggle. Our fight to safeguard peace, complete independence, and achieve democracy and eventual peaceful reunification of our country will be a protracted and hard one.

On this occasion the NFL Central Committee and the PRG eagerly call on :

— All officers and men of the People's Liberation Armed Forces to go on strictly and thoroughly implementing the cease-fire order, carrying out the policy of national concord with officers and men of the Saigon army, and at the same time, more than ever before, increasing vigilance, improving combat and other capabilities, repelling enemy troop-ups and encroaching operations and stand ready to foil every peace-undermining scheme and to defend the liberated zone, the revolutionary power and the people.

— Fellow-countrymen and fighters in the liberated zone to strengthen unity and mutual help, rapidly heal war wounds, normalize life, restore production and step by step raise the economic and cultural level of the people, impel medical work and improve the people's health, build the liberated zone into a strong base and constantly consolidate the people's revolutionary power.

— Fellow-countrymen in towns and cities and other Saigon-controlled areas to stage on actions for the US and the Saigon strict observance of the Paris Agreement, and to all terroristic, repressive and liquidating actions harmful to the people's life and property, better living conditions, abolition of absurd taxes and fascist laws, and ensurance of such democratic freedoms as freedom of movement, freedom to work, freedom of enterprise, freedom of the press, freedom of belief...

True to the Joint Declaration of the Indochinese People's Summit Conference, the people, the National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam have always done everything in their power to consolidate and strengthen good neighbour relations and solidarity with the fraternal Lao and Cambodian peoples, and mutual assistance between them and our people. We resolutely support the sacred fight of the Cambodian people for independence and liberty under the leadership of the United National Front of Cambodia headed by Samdech Head of State Norodom Sihanouk, and of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia with Samdech Pennouth as Prime Minister and Mr Khieu Samphon as deputy Prime Minister.

We warmly hail the tremendous gains achieved by the Lao people and armed forces in their resistance to US aggression, for national salvation under the leadership of the Lao Patriotic Front presided over by Prince Souphanouvong.

We denounce the US imperialists' and the Vientiane extreme rightwing factions' delaying the signing of the agreement on Lao internal problems, which accounts for continued tension in Laos.

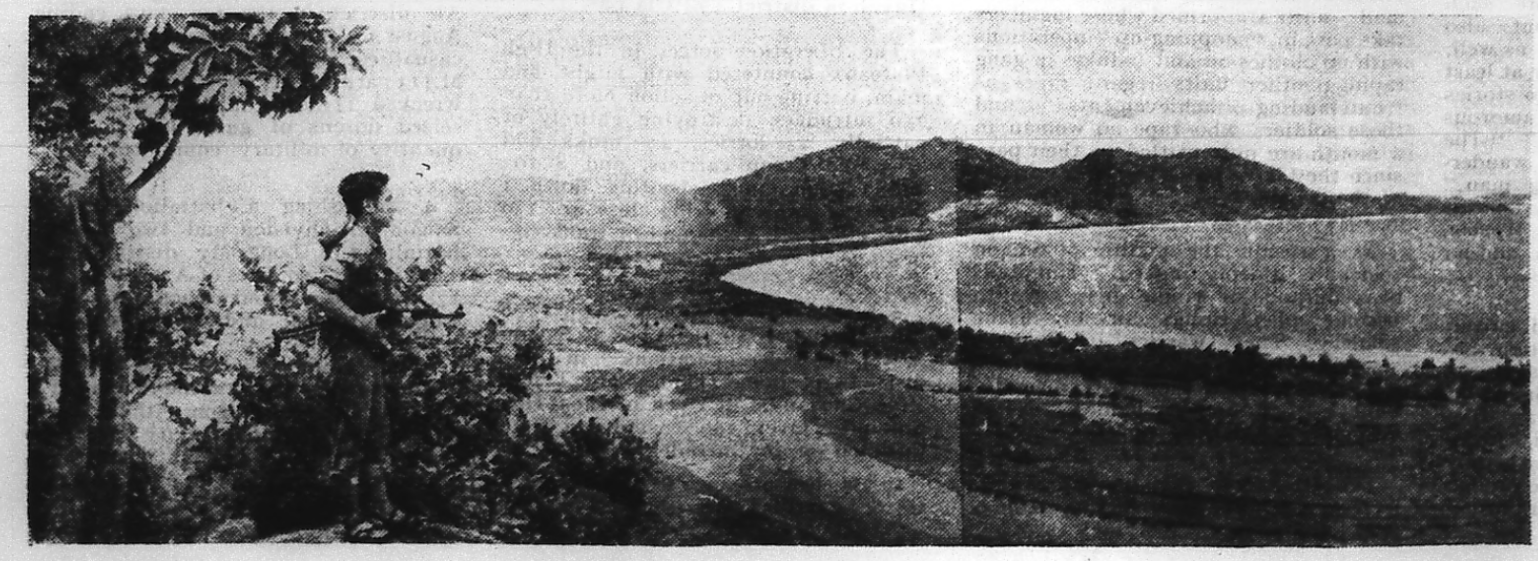
The people of South Viet Nam, the National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the RSVN pursue an external policy of peace, independence and neutrality, abstain from any military alliance, will not let any country keep military bases and military personnel on their territory, and at the same time strongly back the national liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America. With equal resolve we support the struggle of the peoples of the Arab countries against the Israeli aggressors now illegally occupying part of their territory and the fight of the Palestinian people for their legitimate national rights.

We unequivocally identify ourselves with the action of the American people for democracy and social justice, and against war. We firmly support the struggles of the peoples of all countries for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress.

The people of South Viet Nam, the National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the RSVN call on the peoples and governments of Non-Aligned countries and of the socialist countries, on the peoples the world over, including progressive Americans — who have lent invaluable backing and assistance to the South Vietnamese people's fight to give continued and greater support and aid to their current effort to preserve peace, complete independence and achieve democracy.

Let our entire people and armed forces rush forward, give full scope to the spirit of the August Revolution and Independence Day and translate into deeds President Ho Chi Minh's supreme message !

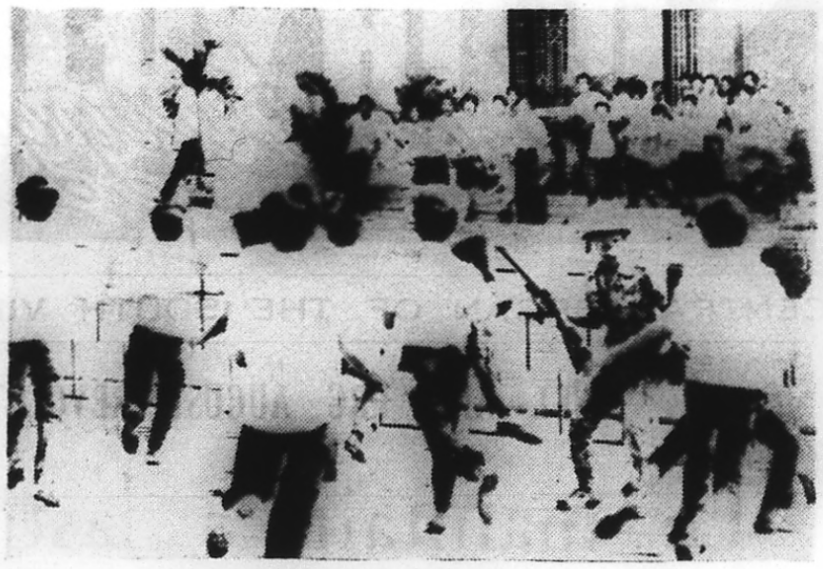
Total victory will be ours !



For the security of our liberated zone

US way of life

Depravation, sex and crimes in South Viet Nam cities



Students fighting against Thieu's police

WITH huge financial and other resources at its disposal, the Nixon administration has imported into South Viet Nam all kinds of US and other Western decadent culture, which has greatly harmed the moral and sentimental life of our peoples in South Vietnamese cities. Big brothels, "recreation centres," casinos were organized by none other than the US aggressors and Saigon authorities themselves to poison our youth of both sexes. *Giao Chi Hippies*, a sex-mad movement born in the United States, has taken root in Saigon with the blessing of the Nguyen Van Thieu administration. A Hippy Festival under the label of "Young Musicians' Jubilee," was held under the auspices of the Thieus at the Hoa Lu Gardens, in Saigon; young men and women were allowed to live there an "absolutely free life" of odd-looking dresses, erotic music and sexy dances. The Festival was frowned upon by the Saigon press and opinion. Professor Ly Chanh Trung, in his article *To understand the Age of* 20, wrote: "The Republic of Viet Nam is the only country in the world with an administration which dares to legalize and encourage the Hippy movement." A contribution to youth depravation was made by Saigon MPs by importing into South Viet Nam thousands of girlie calendars which were on sale in all Saigon shops. Photos of couples in sexual intercourse positions were openly distributed by members of "Phoenix" and "Swan" teams in streets and hamlets of the Saigon-controlled zone.

The US Information Service in Saigon runs a regular exhibition of nude photos and gives free copies of pornographic magazines of the "Play Boy" type, sex and cloak-and-dagger US films with sex are constantly shown.

In the war years, with the presence in South Viet Nam of more than half-a-million GIs and hundreds of thousands of other troops from pro-US countries, the US decadent culture and way of life was rapidly spreading everywhere, especially around military garrisons.

If in the US there exist groups of girl gangsters, in Saigon, Hue, Da Nang you can also meet members of the "CTY" organization (1), the "Teen Agers' Party," "the Dust-of-Life Party" which have been driving so many boys and girls into depravation. If in the US there exist skin magazines, in Saigon not only are such things widely circulated but also "dirty" books can be bought as well. Nearly all Saigon papers carry at least one page of 6-8 serialized porno stories with such captions as "The amorous lady," "The lady's world," "The wandering girl," "The night wandering girl," "The lone-sleeping man," "I am tramp" ...Weeklies such as *Art and Literature*, *Vanguard*, *Women*, *Silver Screen* also abound in similar prurient literature.

Strongly impelled depraved culture helps aggravate social corruption. Sex is predominant in novels, music poetry, cinema, television and almost all publications in South Viet Nam. Tuy Hong, Thuy Vu, Nguyen Thi Hoang, Le Xuyen, Hoai Diep Tu... have acquired a fame for their suggestive productions. They are writers that are lost to conscience and national feeling and practically help the aggressors. "Violet horizons," "Velvet eyed Loan," showing nude dancers, are simply repellent. Apart from them there are "Westerns", "Cloak-and-dagger" films ruling the roost on cinema and television screens. More and more US blue films are screened in Saigon.

US monopoly capitalists have been resorting to conomic means, namely aid, to influence the youth and other people in South Vietnamese cities, inculcate in them a decadent way of life and turn them into hooligans without an ideal. US dollars, gadgets and commodities have been invading South Vietnamese cities and creating there new artificial needs and habits, thereby fast binding the South Vietnamese youth and people to the US war chariot. During the war years, Saigon's industry was almost non-existent while trade took on considerable dimensions. Non-producers led a life of luxury in contrast with the labourers. Owners of tea-houses, *bistros*, dancing-halls, Turkish baths, snack-bars, beauty parlours... increased in numbers. High officials, generals, militarymen and the youth living in towns and areas under Thieu's control were fond of US fashion and way of life. Selfishness and resignation to live a slave's life was prevalent.

There exist overt advocates of crimes and embezzlement, who sometimes go the length of considering these a "must" (Chu Tu, editor of *Song Than*). Many people try their best to enjoy life and regard this as an end in itself, the main content of their existence; they consequently seek every way to attain this objective.

The American way of life and culture has led to various forms of decadence and licentiousness — existentialism, Hippies, self-offering — all for uninhibited sexuality.

The US-Saigon regime has been perverting the youth, teen-agers and other money-greedy people and depriving them of all national consciousness and all fighting spirit for independence and freedom. It will eventually drive them into the army and turn them into thugs specialized in looting, pilfering, raping and killing. The Saigon army is precisely an organization for further depraving the soldiers. In certain localities, "sex-mad" units are formed whose members take part in "mopping-up" operations with no clothes on and indulge in gang raping; other units regard rapes as "outstanding achievements" and those soldiers who rape no woman in a month are not entitled to their pay, since they have proved to be a "friend of the people."

As a result, the picture of Saigon society is gloomy indeed. "Hundreds of thousands of young girls have to become play things for an insane soldiery. They wander in Saigon's streets in strange and suggestive attires to such an extent that one can hardly believe they are Vietnamese" (*Dan Chu Moi* — a Saigon paper).

The US-Saigon rule has committed a serious crime in spreading such a culture and way of life in the cities and areas under its control.

A stubborn fight against this servile culture and for the defence of national culture has been carried out without let-up since the war years.

Though compelled to sign the Paris Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Viet Nam, the US imperialists are still hatching dark designs. The Thieu administration remains a tool for the realization of US neo-colonialism. The fight against the latter on the cultural front is therefore of utmost importance and urgency. It is being waged by those who have at heart the national culture and by millions of South Vietnamese who are set upon eliminating US depraved culture and way of life and defending Vietnamese culture. Their effort will certainly be crowned with success.

(1) CTY: abbreviation for three Vietnamese phrases meaning: need love, give love and rob love.

Land-grabbers punished

o The month ending August 24 saw prolonged operations conducted against the western and southwestern parts of Kontum province aud the northern part of Plei M'rong in Gia Lai province by over 30 infantry, armour and artillery battalions of the Saigon army. Entire battalions or companies were into attacks on an area 11 km northeast of Kontum town and on others east and west of Pleiku, the capital of Gia Lai. There were, all in all, 200 ground attacks, 693 air sorties during which close to 4,000 bombs were used, and repeated artillery shellings with 91,632 rounds fired, in the areas of Trung Nghia, Ngo Thanh, Chu Ret and Plei Klo north of Plei M'rong. Heavy property losses were caused to the population, and many inhabitants were killed or carried off. Very serious destruction was wrought upon the villages of Te, Ta Mon, Nut, Kep Mon and Huynh in district 4 of Gia Lai.

The liberation forces in the High Plateaux countered with might and main, putting out of action more than 750 intruders, destroying entirely or partially 24 lorries, 22 tanks and armoured troop carriers, and 8 103 and 155mm guns, shooting down 4 aircraft, and capturing close to 130 guns of various kinds and 14 transceivers.

o In the first ten days of August the liberation forces foiled over 30 Saigon battalion-sized operations in the districts of Long Thanh, Nhon Trach, Vinh Cuu and Tan Uyen of Bien Hoa province. Over 100 casualties were inflicted on the intruders.

In Ba Ria province from August 1st to 9, guerillas put out of action 30 of the Saigon troops who were raiding Xuan Loc district. Over 300 other Saigon troops were wiped out by the liberation forces from August 1 to 10 along Nguyen Van Tiep canal and the Cu river in Cai Lay district, My Tho.

o On the morning of August 18 liberation regional forces in Tra Vinh province decimated three *security* battalions who were trying to infiltrate into the liberated village of Tap Ngai. Three days before that, guerillas knocked out a whole *security* platoon in An Phu Tan village, Cau Ke district.

o In Binh Dinh province, the liberation forces repeatedly opened fire on a regiment of the Saigon 22nd Division which, under air cover, was trying to take several liberated villages in Hoai An district in the ten days ending August 17, the defenders inflicted 540 casualties, destroyed or damaged 28 M.113 armoured personnel carriers, wrecked 11 heavy machine guns, and seized dozens of guns and a large quantity of military equipment.

o Ambushing a battalion of the Saigon 9th Division and two *security* battalions in Long My district, Can Tho, in the two days of August 15 and 17, guerillas put out of action some 80 Saigon troops and damaged one helicopter.

The same period saw the driving of a battalion of the Saigon 25th Division and a large force of *security* and *civilguard* troops out of Tan Thanh Tay, Phuoc vinh An and Tan Phu villages, Gia Dinh province.

IN PHU QUOC PRISON

IT was the night of May 17, 1972. Another two days and the 82nd birth anniversary of Uncle Ho was due. As usual, without anyone telling the other, we all racked our brains for the most suitable way to commemorate it in our circumstances. Year in and year out, round about May, all the 39 "tiger cages" and "special confinement" wards in Phu Quoc were jammed with inmates. Understandably, on those days, the revolutionary prisoners seemed to be infused with an unusual strength which struck great fear into their jailers' hearts and prompted most ruthless repression.

Three days earlier, they had come and marched off two of our comrades, Nam Kim Hoai and Th. for interrogation. Since then, these had not been returned to our detention centre.

Planning for the 19th of May and anxiety over the fate of our two mates kept more than one hundred of us wide awake.

All of a sudden, the iron door screeched open. Leading a group of four MP's, rotund lieutenant Hoang swaggered in, swept his eyes over us, flourished his baton and pulled down his cap. "Aha, the old man's birth anniversary is near so you sit up late hatching trouble, don't you? Pious sons of his, all of you. Let those who venerate Mr Ho go out and carry in that fellow from Nghe An for him to take a last look of you before he is gathered to his Uncle."

We sprang to our feet all to a man. So they had beaten him to the point of death. The comrades who were lying near the door rushed out to find him with his body all swollen and violet with bruises. All his ten finger-nails were missing. His face was smeared all over with blood and hardly recognizable.

All through the night we took turns giving him first aid, with tears in our eyes. We all thought to ourselves that he would not last out the night.

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TWO days later, on the very May 19, we all stood at attention, in our patchworks of prison garbs, our faces turned toward the North, softly chanting the "Hymn to our leader." Many torture-maimed comrades had exerted themselves in great pain to stand up, their hands gripping the iron bars, singing in whisper. Even now we can still see in our minds' eyes their solemn-looking and emotion-tormented faces.

The singing ended without no one of us knowing it, because there was no musical accompaniment, no time-beating and no audible words. But in everyone's heart, it resounded majestically.

After a few minutes' silence in Uncle's memory, we listened to Th.'s account of Nam Kim Hoai's last battle which he had witnessed.

"As a native of the North," Hoang asked him, "have you ever met Mr Ho?"

"I am of Northern descent," he replied, "and my people came to Saigon to earn their living long ago. But every honest Vietnamese carries Uncle Ho's image engraved in his heart."

"Are you of the number of those honest Vietnamese?"

"My presence in Phu Quoc prison and here in front of you at this very moment is the most relevant answer to your questions."

"Is it true that every year on May 19 and September 2, you stage mutinies in there?"

"It is no mutiny to struggle for full enforcement of the prison regime and against unwarranted brutalities. As for the dates you have just mentioned, they are national historical days."

"Before your transfer to this island, where were you arrested?"

"In Saigon."

"Do you know what the attitude of the Saigonese toward Mr Ho is?

"With the exception of Mr Thieu and his hirelings, all the people there live up to the affection of the eponym of their city."

Hoang's knee hit hard at Hoai's chest. Blood trickled down from the left corner of his mouth on the concrete floor.

They took him to the next room and kept him there until ten p.m.

That was the first session.

Hoang was just carrying on the job the Saigon army intelligence service had started with unheard-of cruelties on our comrade: interrogation for his dossier. He was now concentrating on his feeling for Uncle Ho.

"According to you who are a pretty clever fellow," Hoang resumed his questioning the next day, "are all the more than 30 thousand POW's on this out-of-the-way island Mr Ho Chi Minh's followers?"

"For us, President Ho Chi Minh is the symbol of an ideal for which we fight all our life".

"An ideal we fight for all our life!" the thug echoed the militant's words, punctuating them with blows from his hunting whip made of zinc barbed wire.

"You can murder me, you can murder all of us here on this island," Hoai kept talking back, "you can't change this fact."

"Is that true that on the day of Mr Ho's death, you all wore under your sleeves a mourning band for seven days?"

"Not only I but all of the inmates of the 11 wards on this island did that with a deep sense of loss."

"How do you know?"

"Because all of us are President Ho's sons or nephews."

"Was there anyone who didn't mourn for him?"

"Allow me to ask back this question: If your father or your mother happens to die, won't you mourn him or her?"

Hoang's face darkened. He gulped down two glass of alcohol and screamed at the top of his anger-choked voice:

"Enough of your cheek, enough of your cheek. You dare ask back, daren't you?"

His knee again bumped against the middle of Hoai's chest. His body doubled, his arms folded round his chest. Blood flowed out of his lips and soaked a flap of his jacket. He tried to lift his head to say something more but he just collapsed into unconsciousness.

That was the second session.

Night of May 17. Hoai's strength was fast ebbing away. His skin was white from loss of blood. His shorts had grown too tight for his swollen thighs. But the questioning went on all the same.

"What province in the North do your parents come from?"

"Nghe An."

"They have told me that your name, Nam Kim Hoai, is a symbolic one. Is that true?"

"It has been given to me by my people."

"But there is some meaning, some nice meaning to it, isn't there?"

"My first name, my middle name, my surname have been mine since they were recorded on my birth certificate at my birth in Saigon. You can read into it what you like.

"Look here. Don't put on that ignorance act. Nam is for Nam Dan, Kim is for Kim Lien. And Hoai means long for (1). Don't try to fool me."

Then he called in two MP's and ordered them to force Hoai face down on the table. They pulled out his arms full length and with an iron instrument extracted one by one the nails from his ten fingers. Pools of blood curdled on the floor.

That was the third and last interrogation carried out by Hoang with Nam Kim Hoai.

Th.'s eyes were red. Other eyes around him also were wet. The silence in the ward was profound. Everyone was making to Uncle an unuttered promise: "Uncle, dear Uncle, even if the edges of swords are put to our necks, even if the point of bayonets are thrust against our backs, even if the muzzles of guns are levelled at our chests, we will remain loyal to the country, to you."

TRAN THANH

(1) *Nam Dan is President Ho's native district and Kim Liem his home village.*

The people's aspiration: peace and national concord

IN the Paris Agreement, the United States has pledged to respect the Vietnamese people's fundamental national rights and the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination, and to end its military involvement and its interference in the internal affairs of South Viet Nam. Therefore, peace and national concord has become one of the priorities in the settlement of South Viet Nam's problems by the South Vietnamese parties concerned. The achievement of national concord will ensure genuine peace, reunion of divided families, honour and a bright future for every member of the greater family that the Vietnamese nation is — a nation with the tradition of "every sacrifice being preferable to slavery," and also of "fellow-countrymen duty-bound to love one another."

On the other hand, opposing peace and national concord is prolonging fraticidal killings, wrecking the happiness of the entire people and harming one's own future and honour.

It is with that in mind, of course to varying degrees, that more and more people have raised their voices for national concord in the zone under Saigon.

Leaders of religious communities have chosen peace and national concord as the topic of their sermons. Said Buddhist dignitary Thich Duc Nhuan of the United Buddhist Church: "Reconciliation is a living principle to build a society of civilized, enlightened and emancipated men, in which men know how to love, tolerate and enjoy life together, without the rule of force and without exploitation of man by man."

Prominent figures in literature and art have also been discussing the same subject. Writer Vu Hanh wrote: "At present (literary and artistic) works should be orientated to peace and democracy, that is, based on a national content of which the majority of the people's aspirations form the main factor. There is no greater joy if all of our country's litterateurs and artists sit down together to discuss and create."

This opinion voiced by a Saigon professor is also shared by the literary and artistic circles: "All of us men of letters and artists, no matter what our religious or political tendencies, should get together to strive for the common goal, harmonize our views and coordinate our actions to uphold national concord. Our thoughts, our political leanings and our styles of work may differ but we have common aspirations which are peace, independence, freedom for our nation" (*Dien Tin*, March 29, 1973).

Despite drastic censorship, Saigon papers have been devoting ample space to national concord.

Dien Tin April 13: "Our nation is of one and the same origin, that is why after so many ups and downs, after so many divisions, internal strifes and so much feud, justice always remains on the side of those who advocate solidarity, unity and magnanimity. We have the same ancestors. As fellow-countrymen and blood brothers with the same historical past, we are firmly confident that nothing can prevent reconciliation between Vietnamese."

Tin Sang April 13: "To settle internal problems, there should be a spirit of national reconciliation and concord. If one has at heart the Fatherland's and the people's interest and implements the Paris Agreement in such a spirit, there will be no insurmountable obstacles."

For other circles the issue of peace and national concord concerns Vietnamese not only in the South but throughout the country.

"One thing is certain: for the South Vietnamese people, the question is not and cannot be preserving the throne of the Nguyen dynasty by calling in the US saviour. For them the question is to seek fair and sensible solutions to bring about peace in national reconciliation and concord" (*Mrs Ngo Ba Thanh, a lawyer*).

"North and South are one. After twenty years' separation why should we not, now that we find ourselves in special situation brought about by the restoration of peace, sit down together with the North Vietnamese, more exactly with our Vietnamese brothers, and reminisce on the past, adjust our viewpoints about the present and together care about our country's future. That would be peace and liberty" (*Professor Huynh Van Tong*).

Meanwhile, the Saigon administration still clamours for war and brands "communist" all patriots, all those who struggle for peace and national concord and against the US interventionnist policy. But whom does it represent?

NGOC BAO

A corner of Viet Nam

By T.J.S. GEORGE

Regional Editor **T.J.S. GEORGE** *of the* Far Eastern Economic Review, *last week travelled from Hanoi to Quang Tri, where the administrative apparatus of the Provisional Revolutionary Government is already highly visible. His report:*

Dong Ha...

... DESTRUCTION in the South ranged wider and deeper than in the North, evidently, because forces under American command were in physical possession of territory here in the South; they bombarded the North only from air and sea. Possession meant defilement at will. To pacify a village was to clear it of all vegetation, relocating the population in special enclosures that the local people call concentration camps. Building airfields and army bases meant the same. Ten miles south of Dong Ha, Ai Tu village gave way in 1966 to a massive base, complete with a jet bomber runway, a heliport, an immense oil dump, an artillery field. To lay the runway, bulldozers cleared 550 houses and 1,800 old graves; 700 cows and buffaloes were killed. Today the base is a junkyard for souvenir collectors. Even so, it gives a mind-numbing idea of the kind of money and material America poured into this war – and the devastation it wrought.

Cease-fire has ended the days of wanton destruction, but it hasn't stopped violence and sudden death. When I visited the former Ai Tu base, I was told not to stray from a one-foot wide footpath for fear of stepping on a land mine, I was also asked not to walk in the compound outside my thatched hut.

The feeling that they were exaggerating things vanished one morning when I went to see the Trieu Phong district clinic. It was a completely rustic scene: paddy fields and marshes. As I sat talking to the doctor, word came that three emergency cases arrived.

Two men and a girl, working in a rice field, had been hit by a delayed action pellet bomb. The spot was 4 kms away and the victims had been carried to the clinic by stretcher bearers. The girl, 23, was lying on a stretcher and nurses were cutting her clothes away. She had been hit in the eye and stomach, and a leg had been broken. As they picked pieces out of the mess that had been her eye, and applied iodine all over her body, the miserable girl writhed and screamed in agony.

The humbly equipped clinic could offer only limited assistance; serious cases are usually transferred to bigger hospitals. Because of the tortuous routine, some never make it. Joe Knickerbroker Jr III is back home in Dayton, Ohio, but American technology ensures that the Dulles-devised, Nixon-nurtured theory of Kill-A-Commie-For-Christ is still in operation in Viet Nam.

What is truly amazing is that more than a decade mindless destruction and intense suffering has not dampened but increased popular morale. A National Liberation Front provincial leader, a young and handsome man who lived for two years in an underground tunnel, said: "Morale is everything. Ho Chi Minh told us that nothing was more important than independence. Once our people understood this, their determination was unshakable. We remembered that our forefathers had beaten the Mongols and now it was our turn to beat the Americans."

Three factors helped keep morale high: oppression by Saigon; the patriotic fervour spread by Ho Chi Minh; and the NLF's total identification with popular aspirations.

The oppression had started under the French but reached its contemporary phase with Ngo Dinh Diem's communist suppression campaign in the 1960s. Every village has its recollection of atrocity. In a small village north of Quang Tri City, they talked of a guerilla girl being taken to the market place, where relatives and neighbours were asked to assemble around her. The girl was tied to a pole and asked to give information about local communists. When she refused they stabbed open her stomach, cooked her liver in a pot of water and forced relatives to drink it, watched by Americans advisers.

I refused to believe the story. That night, back in our hut, a Japanese news cameraman who was with me on the tour showed me a photograph he had taken on a previous visit to areas controlled by the government Nguyen Van Thieu. It showed a body on the ground, with a deep gash across the stomach. Pointing to a group of Saigon soldiers standing around the body, the Japanese said: "They ate his liver. I saw."

American policies under Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon added new dimensions to the story of Vietnamese suffering. The relocation of concentration camps victimised whole village population. I visited two camp sites. These were open-air enclosures with coils of barbed wire providing two tiny gates, like those of animal cages. Sometimes 5,000 to 7,000 people would be crowded into a camp. Movement within the camp and outside was severely restricted. Food supplies were at starvation level and no medical aid, not even in cases of childbirth, was provided. In an average camp there would be six to eight deaths a day. Interrogation sessions were long, torture was common. The young men in the camp would be made to join the Saigon army while the young women would be appropriated for the use of the occupying officers and men.

The resentment which grew in these camps led to suicidal uprisings and demonstrations. Cells and study classes sprouted and in some camps the inmates broke out and turned on their oppressors. Intended to wipe out all traces of communism, the camps became the breeding grounds of revolutionaries. For America the ultimate shame of Viet Nam must surely be that it sided with forces of oppression while the communists fought and suffered with the people.

The NLF leadership was of the people, for the people. They had to be, for they were entirely dependent on the people for vital information, for protection, even for food. The policies they followed in an area once it was liberated reinforced their identification with the common people.

The first thing in a liberated area was to set up a village administrative council and leave it fully in charge. Like North Viet Nam, the PRG has perfected the art of decentralising political power as well as administration. The village councils' primary tasks are to rehabilitate agriculture and set up schools and clinics.

Some of the remotest villages we visited confirmed what the leading cadres had said: There was not a village in the liberated area without a primary school and a doctor. Some of the schools were primitive, but they were doing their job of spreading literacy.

Special leadership schools are training leaders at the grassroots. The one at Trieu Thuan village is worth mentioning because we could get to it only by country boat and then walking some distance through slush and paddy. It was a bombed-out site with only one roof standing. All around were marshes, rice fields.

Under that solitary roof twenty-five men and women ranging in age from 18 to 43 were being taught by a 23-year-old girl. This was an intensive course lasting some ten months and classes went on for ten hours a day. The pupils included militia commanders, chairmen of village councils, chairwomen of local medical and legal units. They were learning history, geography, arithmetic and literature. "This is necessary for them to understand our problems and give leadership," a district leader explained.

The result of this policy was evident in every village we visited. Some of the leaders were weatherbeaten men or middleaged women who seemed barely able to comprehend anything beyond rice-growing. Without exception, however, each could explain the strategic location of his or her particular area, the geographic features and communication system of the region, the sinews of the economy, the meaning of the Paris pacts. It was not parrot talk either, for hard questioning always brought appropriate elaborations reflecting the speaker's understanding of the subject.

Mobilisation of people-power is the secret of the Vietnamese revolution. When Ho Chi Minh called for a general insurrection in 1945, his instruction was to arm the people. In the PRG's Viet Nam today, they are arming the people with education as well.

People-power and organisational genius are the country's main resources as it sets out to solve its problems of reconstruction. They are doing it systematically and patiently. The province as a whole is busy clearing mines, filling bomb craters, repairing irrigation canals, maintaining communication lines and organizing manpower through such campaigns as a youth volunteer movement. The target is to complete agricultural recovery by the end of 1974.

But the cadres are the first to admit that it is a back-breaking job. Life in PRG areas today is difficult indeed. In many villages they are making merely enough rice to meet minimum requirements. Meat is almost a luxury.

There are no industries in PRG territory. If a factory had been set up, explained a spokesman, it would have been bombed immediately. Consequently all consumer articles, from clothes to matches, must come from outside. The South Vietnamese piastre remains the main currency. Help sometimes comes from farther afield. Talks are in progress for Bologna, Italy, to give special reconstruction assistance to QuangTri province, probably on an "adoption" basis.

The burdens of the present are lightened by people's confidence in the future. Like the devastation of the countryside, this optimism must be seen to be believed. "Patience" and "step-by-step" are two phrases one hears over and over again. Nothing, it seems, can curb their spirit: they have a blistered, hardwon debenture on tomorrow.

Dong Ha destroyed by US bombs

To my liberated village

In An Long, in sun-flooded Ha Mi,
The three-month rice blooms early in the fields,
As if to hail the liberation of my home village,
Where the luxuriant green brings out the glowing red of the flags.

From Van Hoa to Bich La in a stretch,
New grass roofs make huts look young again,
Devastated orchards are hoed back to life,
Newly-brought in buffaloes are ambling with their calves.
Fragrant potatoes are thriving,
Fat bunches of bananas are dangling over bomb craters.
To morrow or some day in the future I'll go to Nai Cuu
To fetch a new strain of ground nut, and a new kind of rice.
The bumpkin plants bloom into yellow stars, the maize into flags,
The flocks of fowls peck about in the golden sun,
The cross-bred pigs soon get used to new vegetable feed,
The screeching of hammocks mingles with the lilt of lullabies.
You have resumed your ferrying on the canal,
Where your boat glides, light as a feather, on the blue stream,
The very stream the enemy used to patrol,
The very stream where their presence silenced your singing in the moonlight.
At the Vinh Dinh, clam soup tastes nice anew,
And so do waterlily soup and sour cabbage,
In the mouth of the Liberation fighter home on leave,
A pleasant change from stale rice for months on end.
The textile shops are again crowded with customers,
While you are choosing some pink cloth for a tunic,
While thinking of him down there,
Who had to rush upstream into safety...
Even when Trieu Hoa was carpet-bombed more than one hundred times
And strafed with every kind of shells,
The hibiscus hedges kept displaying their purple blooms.

No wonder now that our land is ours again...
For long we have known what it is worth,
This land where our red blood was shed on each bush
For our fields to grow green now in freedom.
In the outpost, our guns are still at the ready,
While flares are glimmering over there on the other side,
While Mad Buffaloes (1) *are casting lurid shadows at dusk,*
While barbed wire is making deep scratches in the blue sky,
Our nights near the fox-holes are bound to be wakeful.

Nai Cuu
July 15, 1973

TRAN HUU TONG

(1) Name of a Saigon Marine Battalion

The old lady from Cu Chi

You entrusted me with this plot of land
Rank with weeds and pock-marked with craters.
It reminded me of the home village,
Though its main path had been obliterated.
It was a mixture of ashes and steel splinters,
Night after night blood flowed on its landing stage,
Day after day, its stream rolled hatred and love.
Each blow of the hoe turned up oodles of affection.

When I came back, dawn was breaking.
How beautiful our ancestors' land, amidst the fluttering flags.
Along its bomb-churned-up lane,
Lush gourd grow green, lullabies sounded sweet.
Spring was coming to all of us !
Our land returned like a lover.
I went, always with a thin cake of pressed rice,
With a rifle for long lovingly laid by,
With your heart, oh, old lady from Cu Chi,
With images of the old river deep in my soul,

Your recommendations were still ringing in our heads,
Our love for our land burning in our chests.
From far-away places I came back
To find you in the sun, felling bamboos, rebuilding your house,
In your faded clothes.
"My house is always for you to sleep in," you said with a smille.
Your trembling hands had torn the barbed wire fence,
A job more gruelling than our long trip up hill and down dale.
This land is Cu Chi,
A no-man's-land in stormy times,
Soaked with your affection,
Where you fed us on balls of rice saved from your camp ration.
I returned to our land and our people
To better understand Cu Chi, to better understand the beauty of your life.

GIANG NAM

In commemoration of President Ho Chi Minh's 4th death anniversary

ANA ON UNCLE HO'S LAST YEAR

LE VAN LUONG

UNCLE Ho dedicated his whole life to the battle for national independence and national unity. His feeling for South Viet Nam was of the warmest. "It is there, in my heart," he used to say. "Another day of partition,

another day of our Southern people's suffering is another day of poor appetite and broken sleep for me," he also confided. Short of the liberation of the South, he considered his duty unfulfilled. So when awarded by the National Assembly the highest honour of the country, he requested Parliament to defer its conferring. "Let's wait until the South is completely liberated. Then please allow our Southern fellow-countrymen to pin it on my breast.." All those anecdotes, we all know. But there are others which not many comrades, not many fellow-countrymen of ours know yet.

They do not know that in the grimmest years of our confrontation with the US, Uncle Ho insisted on going South to "visit our comrades and fellow-countrymen there." The Polit Bureau, seeing that his health had declined, ventured that it would try harder to speed up the successful conclusion of the resistance effort so that Uncle could safely go. "I want to go now, at this most crucial moment. It will not be the same after we have got the better of the aggressors."

From time to time, Uncle raised the matter again and asked the comrades in charge to report progress on the preparations. At his firmness of purpose, they had to tell him all about the hardships and difficulties of the expedition, which might prove too big for a man of his age. "If there is no other way, why don't you organize a march for me to walk a little distance each day. If you can do it, so can I. Let's see who will out-walk whom."

In his last years, though greatly weakened and tiring quickly, he continued to take long walks and climb hills, even rather steep ones against the doctors' advice. I was aware of his intention: he only wanted to check whether he was still fit enough to make the journey to the South, after some training.

From 1967 onwards, he grew much feebler. He gave strict orders for any visiting comrade from the South to be brought to him. So at that time, there were hosts of them about in his house, mostly women and children. They all had to keep him posted on the situation there and found in him a patient and cheerful listener.

His concern about the interests of the people and the country was first and foremost in his mind and his selflessness was absolute. His self-effacement was also remarkable. On his birthdays, he usually tried to dodge the crowd of best-wishers. In the years when he was still going strong, he always disappeared somewhere, on such occasions. In 1969, when the Polit Bureau issued the resolution of the commemoration of 4 great anniversaries (the Party's 40th Founding Day, Lenin's 100th birth anniversary, the DRVN 25th Founding Day and his 80th birthday), his health was at a very low ebb. The decision had been taken subject to his approval, as they had arranged for him to preside over only the most important meetings dealing with priority A state or party affairs. When informed of the 4 Major Anniversaries resolution, he said he "okeyed only the 3 4" of it, meaning to say that he objected to the celebration of his own birthday. "It makes sense to make Lenin's 100th birth anniversary a great occasion but it does not to do so with my birthday. Instead of putting out so many copies of the book about me, you'd better save the paper for school text-books which are not in adequate supply for the children."

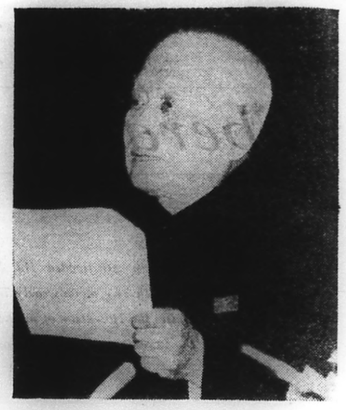
Not to cause alarm among our comrades and people over his decrepitude, he never spoke about it. In spring 1969, he still insisted on taking part in the tree-planting drive, visiting grass-roots institutions and interviewing cadres, whenever his health permitted it.

He strictly followed his doctors' prescriptions and advice. As a rule, he disliked injections. But now he tolerated them and sometimes, he remained lying for hours during transfusion. He had been a chain-smoker many scores years. Now he cut down the number of cigarettes he smoked a day and gradually got rid of the addiction. When he could still move about, he regularly did his morning jerks and took walks every day around the Presidential Palace's park.

When he had to keep in bed because his illness was quite serious, he seemed reluctant to let everyone know about it and probably — and this was my own guess — he still believed he could pull through. The doctors were more worried than he who had to cheer them up. In his conscious moments, he always listened to the world news and news about the North and the South, particularly about the South. He wanted preparations to be made for him to appear for "a few minutes" at the forthcoming National Day celebrations to see the people. Having learned of the visit of a high ranking comrade from the South, he ordered him

to be brought in to see him. Unfortunately when the latter arrived, Uncle had been racked into sleep by a stroke. After taking a long look at him, our comrade left at the physicians' advice the sick room, shaken by sobs.

Uncle Ho is gone for ever. Our resistance effort has come to a glorious end. But the US imperialists have apparently not learned the lessons of history. We are resolved to fight on and sweep out neo colonialism from South Viet Nam, build the North into a strong country and eventually achieve national reunification, in fulfilment of our duty and Uncle's last wishes.



To President TON DUC THANG
President of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam
President of the Presidium of the CC of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front

Beloved Uncle Ton!

On the occasion of Your 85th Birthday, on behalf of all the people, cadres and armymen across South Viet Nam, the National Front for Liberation Central Committee, the Advisory Council and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam, we wish to extend to you — a veteran fighter of the Vietnamese revolution and a staunch and close comrade-in-arms of President Ho Chi Minh — our most respectful greetings.

This year, we are celebrating your birthday at a time when we have recorded great victories of historic significance and the Vietnamese revolution turns to a new stage with the upgrading and victorious spirit that no reactionary force can check it.

In the past over six months, with the strength of unity of the whole Vietnamese nation and the strong support of the world people, the struggle of our people to force the United States and the Saigon administration to strictly and scrupulously implement the Paris Agreement has won an important initial victory. Though being defeated and driven into a position of weakness and difficulties, the US has still obdurately maintained the Saigon administration with the hope to realize its neo-colonialism in South Viet Nam and prolorg the partition of Viet Nam. The Saigon administration, supported and encouraged by the US, has still clung to its bellicose and stubborn stand, continued violating in a systematic and extremely serious manner many provisions of the Paris Agreement and the Joint Communiqué.

At present, the South Viet Nam armed forces and people, strictly carrying out the sacred testament of beloved President Ho Chi Minh and enhancing the undaunted and indomitable tradition of the August Revolution, are striving to strengthen their unity, struggle to preserve peace and force the US and the Saigon administration to scrupulously respect and strictly carry out the Paris Agreement and the Joint Communiqué. At the same time, they have spared no efforts to build and consolidate the liberated areas, build the revolutionary forces stronger in all fields, fulfil the tasks of the national and democratic revolution, improve the people's living conditions, achieve national concord and proceed to the reunification of the Fatherland. That struggle, though difficult and complicated, will win total victory.

The compatriots and combatants in South Viet Nam pledge to enhance the recorded victories, overcome all hardships and difficulties and fulfil all the glorious tasks in the new stage of their struggle.

We wish you good health and longevity.

South Viet Nam, August 18, 1973

Lawyer NGUYEN HUU THO
Chairman of the Presidium of the CC of the NFL, President of the Advisory Council of the RSVN PRG

HUYNH TAN PHAT
President of the RSVN PRG

Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho on Summit Conference of Non-Aligned countries

On the occasion of the forthcoming Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned countries in Algiers, Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation and of the Advisory Council of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam granted an interview to the weekly **Revolution Africaine,** *organ of the Algerian National Liberation Front Party.*
Following are questions and answers:

QUESTION 1: *Mr Chairman, you are going to take part in the biggest conference in the history of the movement of the Non-Aligned countries to be held in a capital whose name is closely linked with the victorious fight of your country. Would you please tell us your feelings on the eve of this event?*

ANSWER: In view of the present historical background and the important tasks ahead of it, the coming Algiers Summit Conference is really a great and magnificent gathering of our big family of Non-Aligned countries. In my opinion, the choice of Algiers, the capital of a country whose tradition of undaunted struggle against imperialism has long been closely linked to the warm support for the just struggle for independence, and freedom of the people in various countries, as the site of the conference, has a special important significance. It will create favourable conditions for the work and success of the conference which will respond to the expectations and earnest aspirations of the peoples in Asia, Africa and Latin America and of the peace- and justice - loving peoples all over the world.

The delegation of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam considers it a honour to participate in the Conference and pledges together with the delegations of other countries, to do its utmost to help the conference achieve the best successes.

Regarding me personally, this is the first trip to Algeria and also my first trip to a friendly country after our people's fight against the US imperialist aggressors and their henchmen has recorded glorious victory concretized in the signing of the Paris Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Viet Nam. I'm very glad to have an occasion to directly express our deep and sincere gratitude to the fraternal people and government of Algeria, to esteemed President Houari Boumediene, the national liberation movements and the peoples and governments of Asian, African and Latin American countries, who have been actively supporting the just struggle of the South Vietnamese people till final victory.

QUESTION 2: *It is said, Mr Chairman that the Movement of Non-Aligned countries has gone through periods of inactivity since Bandoeng. Is this a correct remark?*

ANSWER: Since the Bandoeng Conference, though it has, at one time or another, faced difficulties and obstacles caused by the imperialists and the colonialists, the movement of Non-Aligned countries has not ceased to evolve and progress and has obtained good successes. The tendency to unite in the struggle against US-led imperialism and old and new colonialism, has been clearly strengthened. This event of important significance reflects the seething and victorious struggle of the national liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America and of the peoples of the Third World to win and consolidate national independence and sovereignty. It also reflects the victory of the world people's struggle for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress. At the same time, it proves the position of defeat, passiveness and serious weakening of imperialism and old and new colonialism, typified by the failure of the imperialist ringleader, that of the US in Viet Nam and in Indochina.

QUESTION 3: *How do you appraise the contribution of the Non-Aligned countries to your people's fight against foreign aggression?*

ANSWER: On the world people's front of solidarity with the Vietnamese people's fight against the US imperialist aggressors and their lackeys, the Non-Aligned countries have made important contributions. The Non-Aligned countries have strongly supported our just fight for genuine independence, freedom and peace, and our fair and reasonable proposals concerning a correct settlement of the South Viet Nam issue. They have on many occasions condemned the criminal schemes and acts of the US aggressors and their henchmen against the South Vietnamese people. Among the 34 countries which have recognized and established diplomatic relations at Ambassadorial level with the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam there are 22 Non-Aligned countries. The fact that the Provisional Revolutionary Government was invited to take part in the Lusaka Summit Conference and has been recognized as a full member of the big family of Non-Aligned countries since the conference of foreign ministers held in Georgetown, has eloquently manifested the lofty sentiments, strong support and new encouragement of the movement of Non-Aligned countries to the South Vietnamese people and the Provisional Revolutionary Government. Along with this great, warm and precious support in the political, diplomatic and moral domains, the PRG and the South Vietnamese people have also received financial and material assistance from various Non-Aligned countries.

Our people will never forget this encouragement, support and assistance indicative of the warm friendship and militant solidarity in our movement. We are convinced that in the new stage of struggle, though still confronting many difficulties and hardships, the South Vietnamese people will enjoy stronger support and assistance in all fields from the Non-Aligned countries.

QUESTION 4: *As you know, part of Africa and Palestine is still occupied and the struggle is going on there, though on a lesser scale than yours. What, in your opinion, is the obligation of the Non-Aligned countries to these nations?*

ANSWER: The peoples of many countries in Africa, the Middle-East and the Arab people in Palestine have been persistently and courageously fighting against old and new colonialism and racism in South Africa and South Rhodesia, and against the US imperialist and their stooges, the Israeli aggressors. This is an integral part of the world people's struggle for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress. Having themselves experienced many sufferings and mournings caused by the war of aggression and the neo-colonialism of the United States, the people and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam deeply understand and resolutely and fully support all the just fights of the fraternal peoples in Africa and the Middle-East. In the present situation, the US-led system of imperialism and colonialism, old and new, has weakened after heavy failures and is facing more contradictions and difficulties than ever before. We think that the countries of the Third World have the noble obligation to reserve for the nations which are languishing under the yoke of imperialism, colonialism and their henchmen, a militant solidarity, strong support and effective assistance in all fields, thus further raising the prestige, increasing the strength and enlarging the great victories of the Third World countries.

QUESTION 5: *Regarding the fight, the South Vietnamese people under the leadership of the National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam, have come out victorious. But a peace in the spirit and letter of the Paris Agreement has not yet become a reality on the battlefield. What is the cause of this situation?*

ANSWER: The Paris Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Viet Nam signed on January 27, 1973 is a great victory of the Vietnamese people in their just struggle against the US imperialist aggressors and their henchmen. The US imperialists were forced to commit themselves to respect the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the Vietnamese people and the right to self-determination of the South Vietnamese people. The United States had to put an end to its war of aggression in both parts of our country and withdraw all its troops and those of its allies from South Viet Nam. Over the past seven months, the South Vietnamese people would have enjoyed a real peace and in South Viet Nam the situation would have stabilized to create favorable conditions for the correct settlement of the internal affairs of South Viet Nam in conformity with the spirit of national reconciliation and concord. However, supported and manipulated by the United States, the Nguyen Van Thieu stooge administration has feverishly conducted nibbling operations against the liberated areas, and police and "pacification" operations in areas under its control, intensified its fascist acts, ordered massive arrests and killings, stifled all democratic liberties, continued the illegal detention of hundreds of thousands of patriotic and peace-loving people, and increased exploitation of the population... As a result real peace has not been achieved in South Viet Nam. In the areas controlled by the Saigon administration there is not the slightest democratic liberties. The life of the people is constantly jeopardized. The only cause of this situation is that, though defeated, the United States still stubbornly clings to its neo-colonialism and continues its military involvement and intervention in South Viet Nam, and that the dictatorial and fascist Nguyen Van Thieu administration, stooge of the US imperialist, still obdurately opposes the aspiration of the South Vietnamese people for peace, independence, democracy and national reconciliation and concord. The US government and the Nguyen Van Thieu clique must bear full responsibility for the dangerous situation caused by them.

QUESTION 6: *Real peace will certainly come to a liberated Viet Nam. Would you like, Mr Chairman, to outline the prospects of the social, political and economic life in such a Viet Nam without GIs, without Thieu and especially without war?*

ANSWER: The systematic acts of violation and sabotage taken by the United States and the Saigon administration prove that they are stubbornly opposing peace, independence, democracy, national concord and the right to genuine self-determination of the South Vietnamese people. The struggle waged by our people in the present stage for the defense and implementation of the Paris Agreement and the June 13, 1973 Joint Communiqué, for the achievement and consolidation of a lasting peace in Viet Nam, for the realization of independence and democracy in South Viet Nam and for the eventual peaceful reunification of the Fatherland, still has to go through many difficulties and hardships. But the balance of forces in various aspects in South Viet Nam has changed and is changing in favour of the revolutionary forces. Nothing can reverse that trend. The US imperialists' neo-colonialism and the "Nixon doctrine" which have gone bankrupt will totally collapse in South Viet Nam as well as in Cambodia and Laos. The dictatorial and bellicose junta, henchmen of the United States, will be overthrown by the people.

When South Viet Nam is completely liberated and the right to genuine self-determination of the people is achieved, our people will establish a really national and democratic political regime, free of all

(*Continued on page 11*)

National Day features

HIGHER AND PROFESSIONAL SECONDARY EDUCATION IN DRVN

Before the August Revolution (1945) Higher and Professional Secondary Education service was non-existent in Viet Nam. University students only numbered by the dozens, and most of them majored in medicine and law.

After the founding of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, the Government undertook to train a contingent of scientific and technical workers with a high knowledge of basic sciences and a high level of practice, capable of solving scientific and technical problems of Viet Nam and catching up with the advanced level of the world."

Following that orientation, the people's administration has thus far trained more than 300,000 scientific, technical and economic cadres and more than 400,000 workers. These include nearly 2,000 cadres above university level, nearly 100,000 cadres of university level and 200,000 cadres of professional secondary educations.

North Viet Nam now has 37 universities or colleges with 200 faculties and 800 subjects and 192 professional secondary schools with over 200 different branches, about 8,000 lecturers 7 per cent of them above university level.

Since the August Revolution and under the new regime, the Vietnamese language has become the teaching medium.

During the war against French colonialism, the educational service actively put into effect President Ho Chi Minh's instruction: "combat famine, illiteracy and foreign invaders." After the signing of the 1954 Geneva Agreements, peace was restored in North Viet Nam, the people's administration created favourable conditions for the rapid establishment of the higher and professional secondary education system.

After 1960, the higher and professional secondary education service strove to implement the guideline of linking education with production and social activities. Almost all the schools operated on a "part-study and part-work" basis, thus bringing the school closer to life.

In the first US war of destruction under Johnson, the higher and professional secondary education service in North Viet Nam performed well the evacuation by scattering schools and students. As a result, faculty members and students were adequately protected and it was possible to provide enough scientific and technical cadres to the war of resistance.

When Nixon resumed the bombing of North Viet Nam, the higher and professional secondary education service changed its activities to fit the new situation by sending professors and students to the battlefronts and production sites, including the hottest spots, to study while serving well the fighting. During this period, professors and students made big contributions to solving many problems of national defence, transport and communication, agriculture and local industry.

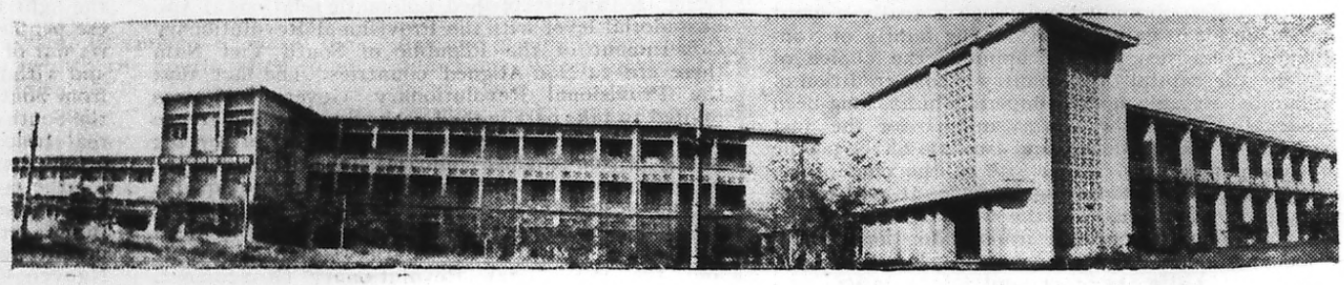
Higher education students in North Viet Nam have been graduating at the yearly rate of 17,500, among them 2,800 from complementary and 5,000 from on-the-job courses.

Professional secondary schools, for their part, have yearly graduated 21,000 students, among them 10,000 from complementary and 6,000 from on-the-job courses.

Under the French colonialist regime, the highest university enrolment in 1938— 1939 was 730, half of them specializing in law and medicine.

At present among 39,515 higher education students, about 43 per cent are women ; 3,7 per cent are minority nationals, and 77 per cent are workers and peasants.

Among the 51,9000 students of professional secondary schools, 25,600 are women, 2,457 minority nationals and 23,500 workers and peasants.



New buildings for new universities

BAN BANG'S success story

WE visited Ban Bang co-operative (in Bac Quang district, Ha Giang province) on a morning when the harvest was in full swing. In face of it was the tall Bu Den mountain. The golden terraced ricefields spread from one mountain foot to another. Mr Hau met me in a field under harvest, grasped my hand and told me merrily ;

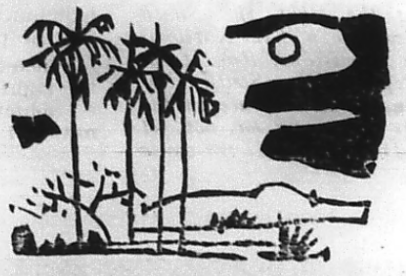
" In four years of permanent settlement, this is the heaviest crop our co-operative has brought in, we'll get at least three tons per hectare. "

Mrs Than who was cutting rice nearby, paused, spat out her betel quid and said :

" Our Dzao nationality is most thankful to the Revolution for its effort to settle us down here. Now we have eve rything : rice, water, clothing and even a script. "

Mrs Than's words plunged Mr Hau in deep thought. He looked up at the cloudy mountain peak and remembered the days when the Dzao had had to wander about and burn patches of jungle into plots of crop land. This land has now become green, but the scars burning still remain like a patchwork on a garment. He cast a sweeping glance at his village scattered on the plain. It is separated from the Bu Den peak by some dozen bamboo lengths, but now why have his life, that of his children and grandchildren and that of the Dzao as a whole, changed so much like in a dream ? Formerly the Dzao lived on mountain slopes ; they roamed about and were at the mercy of " nature " and in fear of the " ghosts ". What they earned by the sweat of their brows was taken away by the " evil powers " and there was left for each family only two or three months supply of maize — not rice — to eat. When they looked down at the plain, from their height they saw everything : food, clothing, water available all the year round, the state store so obliging to the customers, the motor roads running in all directions. The Dzao longed for these things but could not dream of having them.

When he heard of the Government's call, Mr Hau moved all the 32 Dzao families from the mountain of Cao Bo to Ban Bang where, pooling their efforts, they built the present co-operatives. After four years of settlement, they have found no " ghosts " but a bigger entreprise and a radical change to their life. At the sight of the golden ricefields and the bustling village. Mr Hau could not help thinking of the days when the Bu Den plain was still a swamp full of reeds and the Dzao who grew two rice-crops a year were afraid that their grains were eaten up by the " ghosts " or taken back by Heaven. Now Bu Den has 20 hectares of fertile ricefields and Ban Bang has reaped eight crops and rice can be found galore in the fields and in the co-op drying yard. The poultry reared in large numbers are well fed. The acreage, and yield of rice increase year after year (0.1 or 0.2 ton per hectare). According to the statistics of the co-operative, besides the income derived from industrial crops and animal husbandry, each co-op member receives 24 kilograms of paddy per month or an increase of 5 kilograms. From their dream to produce enough food for 8 or 9 months in a year in the time of their nomadic life, the Dzao have now enough for all the year and can even make contribution in grain to the Southern frontline.



No more " selfish individualistic life," no more milpas. Together with the whole province, Ban Bang is embarking on the road of progress. Each household breed some pigs, some dozen chickens, one or two buffaloes. The co-operative keeps about 50 buffaloes. As for water, formerly one had to walk as far as one kilometre to fetch it in two bamboo containers, and more often than not the carrier fainted from exhaustion in the cold. Now Ban Bang boasts 50 percent of fish-rearing-households. Fish, pork and chicken can be found in the Dzao's diet. In so far as industrial crops are concerned, apart from the existing acreage, the Ban Bang inhabitants have cleared tens of hectares of virgin land to be put under tea. They are now considering building factories for the processing of tea, camelia-oil, tung-oil. It is a delight to see the immense tea plantations at Vi Xuyen, and Bac Quang, and everyone is looking forward to doing his bit in the building of that new economic area.

Gone are the maize-leaf roof — huts so cold in winter as in the open air ! At Ban Bang, each family lives in a tidy and cosy teak house on stilts. Small families of armymen benefit from the co-operative's help. The latter possesses a warehouse and a brick yard which at the same time serves as playing ground for children and stage for the co-op dance and song ensemble.

Four years ago when the co-operative was just set up, there was no literate people at Ban Bang. Work-points were calculated by dropping into a container maize grains which, at the end of each crop, determined the distribution of rice. But at present almost all the aldults attending complementary classes can read and write. All children go to school. The leading cadres of the co-operative have finished primary education. Chan, Mr Hau's son, who went through a lot of ups and downs in his nomadic life, is also a 4th former, he is now deputy-head of the co-operative and leader of the " science and technology " team. This team is the standard bearer in the fight against backwardness and introduction of modern technique. While formerly everything depended on the whims of " Heaven and Earth " and the " ghost," at present the inhabitants know how to bring water into their fields, grow higher yield rice intead of degenerated strains on 80% of their ricefields, use fertilizers and insecticides and carry out intensive cultivation.

The more the Ban Bang people look at their present settlement, the better they realize the blessings of the Revolution and the more resolutely they identify themselves with it.

N.Q.T. (DRVN)

Reminiscences on Viet Nam and UNCLE HO

WILLI ZHALBAUM

Executive Member, Secretariat, GDR Committee for Solidarity with Viet Nam

NOT long ago a great honour was awarded to me by the Central Committee of the Ho Chi Minh Working Youth Union, in the form of the "For The Young Generation" Medal bearing a red star and the effigy of beloved Uncle Ho.

Although I knew I was no longer young — my hair was fast greying — I felt, in that moment of great emotion, my heart leaping wildly, as if I were still in the prime of youth. And I was thankful to the young people of Viet Nam — the sons and daughters of the valiant Vietnamese nation and fond nephews and nieces of Uncle Ho — for the honour. They are a whole a new generation, enthusiastic, candid, beautiful, and strong, entirely equal to their "Ho Chi Minh Generation" name.

It was also then that I mentally retraced the journeys I had made in Hanoi, Hai Phong, Hong Gai, Cam Pha, Thai Nguyen, Cao Bang, and many other places in Viet Nam. How I had been moved by my meeting with my Vietnamese brothers and sisters — people who are gentle but courageous, simple but great! In the midst of hardships and sacrifices they always prove their matchless strength and won victory. Wasn't their victory a pride for all of us who, with great resolve and deep conviction, have always sided with them for many years now, and will always do so in the future? As a member of the Viet Nam Committee, I had for many years followed, with all my heart and my soul the progress of this holy war of resistance, and I had also done so with the deep feelings felt by all my fellow-countrymen for Viet Nam in all these years. To us, Viet Nam is the equivalent of Uncle Ho. The name is uttered by each child in our country with fondness, trust and love.

As far as I am concerned I shall ask for the permission to call Uncle Ho father, Viet Nam having become my second country. And I recall to mind, right now, this lovely verse:

Most beautiful in the Plain of Reeds is the Lotus,

Most beautiful in the land of Viet Nam is the name of Ho Chi Minh.

Nguyen Tat Thanh, Nguyen Ai Quoc, Ho Chi Minh... different names of the same iron will, the same fine Vietnamese soul. And these fervent thoughts have brought me back to meeting with him. Let me say this: "It was a very rare chance in my life to meet Uncle Ho. It was also a distinguished reward for a citizen of the GDR who wishes to devote his whole heart to the movement for support for the noble cause of the Vietnamese people."

In the spring of 1969 — his last — we were taken to see him in a small, simple house in the garden of the Presidential Palace. The house itself gave one a complete idea of the life of the President, who only allowed himself the same humble living way of his people.

I had the feeling that I was visiting a beloved father, the eldest brother in a large family, instead of a president.

We sat around him in an atmo-phere of instant intimacy and love. Premier Pham Van Dong had come with us. Uncle Ho enquired after the health of each of us, and invited us to help ourselves to fruit.

"Do you feel the cold here?" he asked.

"Not a bit, Uncle", we said. "Indeed, January in Viet Nam can hardly consider to be cold for us".

"It is not cold, but it may be dangerous", he went on and, taking off his muffler, put it around the neck of Comrade Max Zefrin, Chairman of our Committee, who was coughing a little. The gesture moved us greatly, because it showed the same care as that of a father for his children home from a long journey.

With great pleasure, we reported to him on the movement in the GDR for solidarity with Viet Nam, and placed before him the many gifts to him from the people at home.

What struck us as very incredible was that 37 years had gone by since he lived in our country, and he was still speaking German correctly. He asked us questions, listened to our answers, and said:

"The people in the GDR today are the legitimate and glorious heirs of Marx and Engels, which is a great honour and also a great obligation. It is very imperative for us now to instill into us the proletarian internationalism Marx has conceived."

His concise, meaningful words made the great truths of our epoch suddenly very simple and clear to us. The most remarkable thing was that he considered the Viet Nam revolution to be an integral part of the world revolution and had always had at heart the interest of the latter while providing leadership to the revolution of his own nation. He wore the aura of a great man in all his dimensions, and still remained a sympathetic, easy-to-get-at man.

From time to time I raise my head from these lines to look at the picture he autographed and gave me at that meeting and hear "Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh" as chanted by the young people who had come from all continents to the recent Berlin Festival. Hasn't his name become a synonym with solidarity against imperialism and for peace and friendship? I am also appealing to him to give me more strength to keep up the fight. And I will have this to say: "Uncle Ho is the embodiment of the Vietnamese nation — a nation sentimental yet absolutely indomitable. Thinking of Uncle Ho, of Viet Nam, I realize I must work much harder for Viet Nam. That's why I find life so very meaningful."

The DRVN in construction

Building

The building industry has completed:

— More than 1,000 projects, including 300 industrial, structures, about 400 houses, offices, hospitals, schools, etc.

Its designing Institute has completed the blue-prints of

— nearly 2,000 civilian projects,

— nearly 500 industrial projects.

Agriculture

There are now in North Viet Nam 70 State farms employing 70,000 agricultural workers.

In 1960, 80 per cent of the peasant households were members of 45,000 agricultural co-operatives. In 1972 the proportion reached 96 per cent organized into 20,000 agricultural co-operatives.

In 1972, according to still incomplete data 3,400 agricultural co-operatives, 60 districts, 6 provinces or cities hit the "5-6 tons of paddy per hectare" target.

Also in 1972, the total acreage under food and industrial crops went up by 12 percent compared with the previous year.

The total foodstuff output in 1972 rose by 11 per cent compared with the average yearly output between 1965 and 1968.

Cattle and poultry-rearing

In the first six months of 1973, the herd of buffaloes-main draught force in farming went up by 2 percent compared with the same period in 1972. The number of breeding buffaloes increased by 2.3 percent and accounted for 36.4 percent of the total of buffaloes. That of calves rose by 2.6 percent.

The Moc Chau State farm specialized in cow-breeding now owns cross-bred milking cows that give on an average 3,000-3,500 litres of milk for each milking cycle.

In North Viet Nam, 84.2 percent of peasant households raise pigs. The number of pigs kept in agricultural co-operatives has gone up by 7.2 percent — 12.6 percent in delta provinces.

North Viet Nam rears every year, about 30 million poultry, mainly chickens. In 1972, the Hanoi chicken-farm produced 124 tons of meat and 5 million eggs.

Hydraulics

In 1972, 20 million cubic meters of earth embankment were added to the system. In the first six months of 1973, more than 10 million cubic meters were added to the dykes along the Red, Thuong, Ma, Lam and Chu rivers.

Forestry

Mountain delineation and afforestation have been completed over one million hectares. In 1972, another 27,500 hectares of pines, eucalyptus, bodhi-trees and casuarina-trees were grown.

In the first six months of 1973, in 9 lowland and midland provinces alone 50 million trees of different kinds were planted.

Education

There exist now 37 universities and colleges and 192 vocational middle schools with 14,000 teachers including 8,000 in universities and colleges; 39,515 students (43 percent of them are female) in higher education establishments and 51,913 students in secondary vocational schools.

Every year, 17,500 students are graduated from universities and colleges and 12,000 from vocational middle schools.

Prior to the 1945 August Revolution in the whole ethnical minority area there existed only one secondary school in Lang Son: illiteracy was prevalent among the ethnical minorities.

North Viet Nam can now boast 3 colleges reserved for the highland population: a normal college, a medical college and an agro-forestry college. Nearly 3,000 students from ethnical minorities are studying at home and abroad, that is 6 times as many as the total of students in all the three Indochinese countries in the French time.

The Tay, Nung, Meo and modernized Thai scripts have been elaborated.

Foreign relations

59 foreign countries have established diplomatic relations at ambassadorial level with the DRVN, one country maintains relations with her at consul general level.

Since the signing of the Paris Agreement diplomatic relations have been set up or raise to ambassadorial level between the DRVN and 12 foreign countries: the People's Republic of Bengla Desh, the Australian Federation, the Kingdom of Belgium, the Republic of Italy, Malaysia, the Kingdom of Netherlands, the French Republic, the Republic of Burundi, the Republic of Singapore, the Republic of Iceland, the Kingdom of Iran, Canada.

★ ★ ★

Here and There

WHAT SQUEAMISH PEOPLE

The USA is surely living up to its reputation as a country of novelties. After the President, it was the turn of the Vice-President to come under public investigation for bribery, extortion and tax frauds. Now the GOP has announced the nomination of Colonel L. Hughes, returned Viet Nam POW as candidate to New Mexico governorship. Earlier, other similar nominations had been made of Hughes's mates as runners for senator or representative in the 1974 off year elections.

"The GOP is running very short of representative people indeed," wonders public opinion. More compliant persons view the more from a hilarious angle an administration consisting of President Nixon, Vice-President Agnew, Governor L. Hughes and a Congress made up of ex-air-pirates released by Viet Nam, what a nice state structure!

The American press has reported that some public figures are not happy about the decision: for example, Mayor John Lindsay who is leaving the Republican Party and Representative Paul McCloskey who is staying in it but has initiated a movement for the ousting of Nixon...

What squeamish people these personalities are!

HUONG NAM

On the co-existence of two South Vietnamese administrations

THE current existence in South Viet Nam of two administrations, two armies, two zones of control, is an irrefutable fact which has been recognized by the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam.

This recognition has two-fold important significance, political and juridical. It means that any solution of South Vietnamese problems has to take into account this reality. On the other hand, it confirms that the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam is an administration in the fullest sense of the word, exercising effective control over its territory, occupying a position of authority and playing a decisive role in any South Viet Nam political settlement.

But this recognition does not mean that the two parallel administrations in South Viet Nam could be put on an equal footing, neither could it change their true natures.

Hence the necessity of making a difference between them judging from their true nature, their legitimacy based on the extent of authority they wield and their representativeness at home and abroad.

What then is a legitimate government ?

International law answers that it is a government set up in accordance with the principles of international law, i. e. with the people's fundamental national rights and right to self-determination. This makes the foundation of present-day international law. Elections are only a means for the people's will to be expressed — a common but not the only means : if this is not taken for granted, all revolutionary governments will become unlawful and so will revolutions.

The famous July 4, 1776 Declaration of Independence of the United States pointed out : "Wherever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends (that is the achievement of democratic liberties including Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness), it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundations on such principles and organizing its powers on such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness."

The Resolution of the UNO General Assembly, approved at its December 14, 1960 15th session, formally proclaimed the necessity of putting an immediate and inconditional end to colonialism in all its forms and manifestations, thereby legitimizing all national liberation movements. An amendment of the UNO General Assembly December 20, 1965 20th session recognized the legitimacy of movements for the right to self-determination and independence of peoples under colonial regimes ; it appealed to all countries to do their best to give material and moral assistance to national liberation movements in colonial countries.

On the other hand, the basic criteria for the recognition of a government are : its effectiveness, i. e. the genuine independence of its regime ; its authority over a certain territory and population ; and its representativeness, i. e. its democratic foundations.

Let us, on the strength of international law and of the above-mentioned criteria, examine the two coexisting administrations in South Viet Nam in the light of the past and present situation.

The Provisional Revolutionary Government — a people's power

The PRG was born more than four years ago. Its birth was a turning point marking a momentous success in the course of the extraordinarily hard, but glorious, fight of the South Vietnamese people under the patriotic banner of the National Front for Liberation. It was founded in the midst of the sweeping wave of attacks and uprisings of the South Vietnamese whose strategic offensive on all fronts held in check the US-Saigon most intensive endeavours including their "search-and-destroy" and "pacification" programs which had to be replaced by the "clear-and-hold" defensive strategy. The electrifying gains of the South Vietnamese people and armed forces drove the US and its agents into an impasse in all respects — military, political, economic, financial, internally and externally, in South Viet Nam, in the United States and in the world as well. Washington had to re-appraise the whole of its Viet Nam policy and its global strategy ; it had to seek a way out of the "limited" war in Viet Nam and to de-escalate it through "de-Americanization", fore-runner of Nixon's "Vietnamization". It is therefore evident that the heroism and resourcefulness of the South Vietnamese people and armed forces had foiled, step by step, the biggest war of aggression in history, and been taking them steadily towards the objectives set by South Viet Nam's revolution, namely independence, democracy, peace, neutrality, and ultimate national reunification.

As Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho made clear in a survey in his political report to the All-South Viet Nam Congress of People's Representatives : "The tremendous successes of our people and armed forces led to the formation of vast liberated areas extending from the Southern bank of the Ben Hai River to the Ca Mau Cape, thereby providing our people and armed forces with a solid foothold from where to attack the enemy in all places. In those liberated areas, revolutionary power — a genuine power of the people — was set up. Continuous development was recorded in all fields — production, culture and education, press and information, health, — the foundations for an independent, free and genuinely democratic regime were laid."

The Congress of People's Representatives, convened at the initiative of the National Front for Liberation and the Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces, basing itself on the then prevailing situation, took decisions on the political line of anti-US patriotic resistance in the coming stage and on the establishment of the Provisional Revolutionary Government.

The PRG thus emerged from the mounting movement of the South Vietnamese people for fundamental national rights recognized by the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam. It emerged at a time when our people had already set up many self-governing people's committees, a form of people's power created after smashing the Saigon administrative apparatus at its grassroots. It saw the light at a time when the National Front for Liberation, organizer and leader of the South Vietnamese people in all their successes had assembled various mechanisms of power and received recognition from many states and international organizations. It was chosen by representatives of the broadest sections of the people to the Congress of People's Representatives of June 6, 1969.

The PRG, staunch champion of the genuine fundamental national rights and right to self-determination, and symbol of the South Vietnamese people's bright future

In its unanimouly approved Fundamental Resolution Article 1, the Congress of People's Representatives decided : "The political regime of South Viet Nam is a Republican regime. The motto of the Republic of South Viet Nam is : Independence, Democracy, Peace, Neutrality." Article 2 of the Fundamental Resolution pointed out : "The internal policy of the Republic of South Viet Nam is to strengthen the unity of all people irrespective of social background, religious belief, nationality, political tendency and past record, provided they stand for peace, independence and neutrality. The Republic of South Viet Nam upholds national sovereignty, ensures democratic liberties, respects freedom of belief, enforces equality among all nationalities, carries out land reform, increases production, develops industry and trade, education, health, cultural and social work with a view to continuously improving the material and moral living conditions of the people especially of the labouring people, and mobilizing manpower and material resources, under the motto, "All for the front, all for our Victory."

Article 3 read : "The Republic of South Viet Nam pursues a foreign policy of peace and neutrality, is ready to establish diplomatic, economic and cultural relations with all countries irrespective of political and social regime, in accordance with the five principles of peaceful coexistence, (...), actively supports the movements for national independence, against imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism and for peace in Southeast Asia and the world."

In the past four years, implementing the line of patriotic resistance and national construction laid down in its 12-point Program of Action, the PRG has consolidated the people's united front, mobilized all social segments for the anti-US resistance, enforced to the full the people's right to be master, while putting into effect its foreign policy of peace and neutrality, of solidarity with the world's progressive and revolutionnary forces, of association with the great family of Non-Aligned countries. The just cause, judicious line and popular policies of the PRG have led the South Vietnamese people's fight to increasingly big successes on the three fronts : military, political and diplomatic.

In the four-odd years under revolutionary power, the South Vietnamese people and their courageous armed forces frustrated the atrocious "Vietnamization" strategy, a typical application of the Nixon doctrine. The concerted actions of the South Vietnamese people and of the Vietnamese people as a whole and of the brotherly peoples of Laos and Cambodia baffled all the US strategic calculations in such military adventures as the Cambodian invasion of 1970, the 1971 South Laos Campaign, and concurrently made their "pacification" plan fail. Then with their dramatic strategic offensives of 1972, the South Vietnamese people and armed forces thrashed the Saigon army, an army of mercenaries in US pay, shattered all myths about US military strength, frustrated the "pacification" program and won a news-making victory in checking "Vietnamization" and the "Nixon doctrine."

The North's effective resistance to US air and naval assault compelled the United States to sign the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam which put an end to its aggression. It was a considerable achievement of our nation and an epoch-making victory of all forces fighting for national independence, democracy and social progress all over the world.

The Paris Agreement has taken note of the US commitment to respect the fundamental national rights of the Vietnamese people, to end its aggression and military involvement, to recognize the actual existence in South Viet Nam of two administrations two armies, two zones of control and three political forces, to let the South Vietnamese people exercise their right to self-determination through democratic means and national concord. In the Agreement can be read a US admission of its failure in its attempt to turn South Viet Nam into a neo-colony and military base and the attainment by the South Vietnamese people of the essential objectives set in the NFL Political Program and the PRG 12-point Program of Action. This has brought about a radical change in the balance of forces in South Viet Nam which paves the way for the South Vietnamese people and armed forces to reach other goals. From a major part of the South Vietnamese territory, the US neo-colonialist regime and its client administration have been removed. The PRG-controlled liberated areas' big population, rich resources and the vast economic and military potentials of a regime in which the people are master of their own destiny augur well of their subsequent fight.

The PRG political line has proved its perfect soundness and its skill in wedding advanced revolutionary doctrines to the nation's traditional undauntedness and rich experience.

By implementing a political line consonant with the people's sentiment and the world's revolutionary trend, by remaining identified with other present-day revolutionary currents in the world and the policy of non alignment, the PRG has proved to be an independent administration, born from the people, working for the people and supported and protected by the people.

(To be continued)

HUYNH VAN LY

Chairman NGUYEN HUU THO

(Continued from page 7)

dependence on foreign countries. All citizens belonging to whatever political parties, social strata, nationality and religious beliefs, can express their opinions and contribute to the construction of the country, to the building of an independent, self-reliant and prosperous economy for the happiness of all, to the building of a healthy, progressive, national and democratic culture and education, and to the development of science, technology and public health service. We will re-establish normal relations between the North and the South and proceed to the peaceful reunification of the Fatherland. We will consolidate and strengthen the relations of good neighbourhood and mutual solidarity and assistance among the three Indochinese peoples. We will follow a foreign policy of independence, neutral and peace. In other words, we will strive to achieve our fundamental objective namely to build a peaceful, independent, democratic, neutral and prosperous South Viet Nam and advance to ward the peaceful reunification of the Fatherland, thus living up to the sacred Testament of President Ho Chi Minh, the Vietnamese nation.

Our people have every ground to firmly believe in the final victory, in the bright and glorious future of our beloved country.

QUESTION 7 : *Do you think it possible to establish relations, especially economic ones, with the United States once it has completely withdrawn from your Fatherland ?*

ANSWER : Right at its founding, in its 12-point Program of Action, the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam declared that it was ready to establish diplomatic, economic and cultural relations with all countries including the United States without discrimination of political and social regime, on the basis of mutual respect for each other's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and non-intervention in each other's internal affairs. This spirit of the foreign policy of peace and independence of our Government has also been reflected in Article 14 of the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam.

The establishment of relations in all fields, including economic relations, with the United States cannot be envisaged at present. The only obstacle comes from the United States. In fact, though having been forced to withdraw its troops from South Viet Nam, the US still continues its military involvement and intervention in the internal affairs of South Viet Nam and support the Nguyen Van Thieu stooge administration in its acts of violation and sabotage of the ceasefire, the Paris Agreement and the June 13, 1973 Joint Communiqué.

So long as the US has not given up its neo-colonialist scheme in South Viet Nam and its serious acts of violation and sabotage of the Paris Agreement, there will be no conditions for establishing normal relations between the Republic of South Viet Nam and the United States.

QUESTION 8 : *Mr Chairman may I ask you the last question also concerning the future : Do you think that there can be security when hostile regimes in Phnom Penh and Bangkok still surround your country ?*

ANSWER : Peace in South Viet Nam and Laos is still sabotaged by the US and its henchmen, while the US obdurately intensifies its intervention in Cambodia and its military aid to the Lon Nol puppet regime to oppose the Cambodian people.

In execution of the US imperialists' scheme of materializing neo-colonialism and the "Nixon doctrine", which have gone bankrupt in Indochina, and of threatening peace and security of the nations in Southeast Asia, the Kittikachorn reactionary clique in Thailand continues to give off its country to the US so that the latter may build and enlarge its air and naval bases there.

In face of such a situation, the South Vietnamese people as well as the peoples of the Indochinese countries hold high their vigilance, strengthen their solidarity, build up their forces in all fields, and struggle resolutely to foil all the schemes of the US imperialists and their henchmen, thus contributing to the maintenance of peace and security in Indochina and Southeast Asia.

On this occasion, I wish to ask the editorial board of *Revolution Africaine* to convey to its readers my most cordial and warmest greetings. I wish the fraternal Algerian people many new and yet greater successes in the building of a prosperous and happy country.

SOUTH VIET NAM—THE LAND AND PEOPLE

the zone U MINH

"U MINH," meaning "Realm of Death" is a virgin jungle swarming with mosquitoes, leeches, venomous snakes and wild animals. That "land's end" was formerly inhabited only by poverty-stricken refugees from oppression.

U Minh, a vast region in the west of Nam Bo (former Cochinchina), borders on the Gulf of Thailand, the Ong Doc river to the south and Rach Gia to the north. The northern part called Upper U Minh is separated from Lower U Minh by two rivers : the Trem Trem and the Cai Tau.

From the time of the insurrections led by Phan Tam and Phan Ngu (Scholar-Patriot Phan Thanh Gian's sons), Nguyen Van Chat, Do Thua Luong and Do Thua Tu who used mangrove charcoal to forge weapons to fight the French in 1872, to the August 1945 Revolution and the war against the Americans, U Minh was a solid resistance base of the patriots and a land of Death for any foe who dared to venture into it.

Masters of Upper U Minh

The cajuput forest occupies 166,000 hectares located mostly in Upper U Minh. The trees growing there are so straight that they can handily serve as poles for the PLAF men to hang their hammocks from (complete with mosquito-nets). The trunk is used to make pillars of houses stakes for foundations, boats and oars. Its wood makes good firewood ; its bark is employed to coat boats or to make mosaic decorations. From its branches and especially its leaves one can extract cajuput oil. This essence can be used as an antiseptic or in massage against rheumatism and or as drops against influenza. Modern chemistry can prepare subcutaneous injections from it. The U Minh people also infuse its leaves into a concoction against stomach ache. Its white flowers attract swarms of bees. The fragrancy of its foliage also contributes to make the climate milder and prevent the proliferation of anopheles.

Reeds fallen from branches

Remarkably the mangrove seed sprouts on the branch. The "mother" plant bears the sapling and waits for the right time to drop it on the ground. Fallen from the branch, the sapling which has already a long stem, goes deep into earth and strikes roots fast in the soil. The ducts in the roots enable the plant to "breathe" when it is immersed in sea water. The mangrove forest in Lower U Minh covering hundreds of thousands of hectares is a solid foothold for the Ca Mau tip to advance into sea.

Subsoil secret

Once in 1947, a spy who ventured into the U Minh jungle to collect intelligence never came back. Later U Minh peasants who went about their work incidentally found his body buried deep in a layer of mould. It was in fact humus from such plants as cajuput, mangrove, and other trees, decomposed after million of years by sea water, mixed with silt washed in by sea waves. It is a dozen metres thick, ten of kilometres wide and 50-60 kilometres long. A rough estimate put the volume of medoul in U Minh up to tens of billions of cubic metres. It can be used as fertilijer or fuel.

Fruit grown in aluminous soil

U Minh produces a substantial part of Nam Bo pine-apple grown on 4,600 — 4,800 hectares. In U Minh it grows mostly along the Trem Trem river and the Chac Bang canal on many dozens kilometres long. Its fruit weighs an average 1.5 — 2 kilograms or even more : It can prosper in aluminous soil of pH 4-5. That is why it is advantageously planted in newly cleared land to improve the quality of the soil for further cropping.

Enticing honey-bees

Every family in the U Minh jungle has some dozen «mop» tree trunks 2-5 metres long, as big as a man's leg, for supports for bee-hives. At the end of the rainy season, at dusk, these trunks are carried to the jungle and tied to a tall cajuput marked with a particular identification sign. Ten days or a fortnight later, bees build their hives on them. The "apiarist" has only to inspect them regularly. After taking honey from one hive — which contains about 5 litres of honey — he puts up another set of supports, so as to have honey and wax all the year round.

Habitat of birds

There are legions of birds in the U Minh jungle : wild ducks coming from the North, storks and wild geese from distant lands to spend the winter there.

They can be caught by the hundreds at one swoop. If an egg-laying ground is discovered, bird's eggs can be collected by boat loads from morning to noon. Some of them are as big as hen's eggs.

Dried mud littered with bones

The bones here are not man's but fish's, in the season of shallow waters the fishes are so abundant that they have no time to take refuge in ponds and canals and die, their bones bleaching on the dried mud.

The fish found there are usually : ophicepale, cat fish, anabas and other varieties. Once an old man in U Minh put down his foot into a hole. He hit a fish and withdrew his foot when a fish jumped out and knocked him down. It was a big *loc* with "long whiskers."

Water scooping snake

U Minh snakes are said to be very venomous, especially vipers. These are as big as boas constrictors and have starry eyes and brown-yellow scales. They rush on at the approach of man. Luckily they do not feed on human flesh like tigers but on fish. To catch fish, they span across a ditch, their head coiling on one tree and their tail on another. Then it flattens its body into a board and empties the water of the ditch with a see-saw movement so regular that it sounds like the noise of a scoop worked by a pair of farmers.

A life-long loyalty to the revolution

"THERE is no greater challenge to a nation than war," a philosopher has said. In a little more than a quarter of century our nation had to successively fight several imperialist countries endowed with huge economic potentials and advanced techniques. And it did it successfully.

Taking advantage of the most up-do-date achievements of science and technology, the US imperialists were dreaming of victory in their genocidal war against Viet Nam and Indochina. They however had eventually to quit. Human conscience has triumphed over barbarity and our nation has earned the admiration of all progressive mankind.

I have practised medicine for more than 40 years under two different political and social regimes. I have more and more clearly realized my indebtedness to the Revolution for having educated me into a socialist intellectual. We, brain workers, have had at last the opportunity to develop freely our talents and put them at the service of the Revolution and the labouring people. Formerly, the French colonialists only trained us into medical practitioners. They did not let us acquire post-university education, a *sine qua non* condition for us to delve into new realms of knowledge and build for ourselves a comprehensive scientific foundation for our professional work. Our government is now paying great attention to the training of scientific workers with both moral and professional qualification and full dedication to the people's cause. Our scientific workers so trained have boldly engaged in the study of science and technology, and researches in the most advanced domains of modern science and medicine so as to elaborate a theory of socialist Vietnamese medicine fitting the conditions of a tropical country.

To defeat an enemy like the Yankees is a really difficult job, and yet we have done it. To build a scientific working style for genuine medicine is no easy work either. But we have the Party and a medical organization. We are moreover possessed of juvenile enthusiasm. We are therefore certain of our success.

Our oto-rhino-laryngology Institute was formally founded in 1969. It was trying to find answers to a number of practical problems which were also under investigation in advanced countries. But it was completely destroyed by the US aggressors. We eventually closed our ranks, picked up whole bricks, nails etc. piece by piece from the debris, animated with the resolve to rebuild our Institute into a greater and finer service. Nothing can prevent the achievement of our ambition as scientific workers : Uphold the Party's revolutionary cause all our life. The physician's loftiest quality is "love the patients as his own kith and kin". And his greatest joy is to see everybody in perfect health.

Prof. **TRAN HUU TUOC** (DRVN)

in brief * in brief

o Financial and material contributions are being collected in North Italy's Emilia Romagna for the reconstruction of the province of Quang Tri.

A 5,000-ton ship will leave Genoa for Viet Nam in mid-October with machinery, implements and various equipment, purchased with the donations.

o MP's belonging to the Syrian Communist Party issued on August 14 a statement saying: "The victory of the Vietnamese is a great inspiration to the Arab people's struggle against Israeli aggression. It is also a great contribution to the fight for freedom and peace of the world peoples."

o Recently, the *People and the World* Publishing House of the German Democratic Republic has brought out the book *My kite is full of wind* containing many poems and paintings by Vietnamese young pioneers.

The introduction said among other things:

The Vietnamese children have grown up in hope, remain attached to nature and elderly people, share with them the same tasks, and especially have close ties with the soldiers whose courage they admire."

o On August 13, the Permanent Secretariat of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization, made public a statement demanding that "the US end its military involvement and intervention in the internal affairs of the South Vietnamese, and strictly fulfil its obligations as a signatory to the Paris Agreement and the Joint Communiqué.

The Afro-Asian people's Solidarity Organization urges the US and the Saigon administration to abide by the provisions of the Agreement, comply with the cease-fire order, put an end to all land-grabbing operations and withdraw its troops back to their pre-January 28, 1973 positions."

— Enrique Ricardo Ortiz, 69, and Jose Santos, Cubans residing in the US for respectively 42 and 19 years, on a recent visit to Cuba, called at the DRVN Embassy to hand in 1,380 dollars. The sum had been collected by Cuban residents belonging to the *House of Latin American Countries* organization in New York, as a contribution to the reconstruction of Viet Nam.

— Nyhama, President of the *Viet Nam Movement* of Norway, stated: "The present tension in South Viet Nam is due to US-Saigon violations of the Paris Agreement. The *Viet Nam Movement* will do its best to keep the Norwegian people posted about the situation and force the US and the Saigon administration to carry out fully the provisions of the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam."

o A Vietnamese film drive has been held in Calcutta by the Association of Cinematographic Organizations of the Republic of India. Within a fortnight, 10 feature films and newsreels have been screened in the Indian city. Afterwards, they will be shown in other places in India.

The Association has concurrently organized a Viet Nam photo exhibition at the Institute of Arts in Calcutta. On display are over 300 photos dealing with production, the fighting and the building of a new life by the Vietnamese in South as well as in North Viet Nam.

o The statement of the Secretariat of the International Union of Students said: "Having already associated themselves with the Vietnamese people, youth and students' confrontation with imperialist aggression, the International Union of Students and the movement of the progressive, democratic students are standing and will stand by their side in the struggle for the respect and strict implementation of the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam, completion of independence and democracy in South Viet Nam, and eventual national reunification."

Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho leaves for Algiers

THE Advisory Council and the Council of the Provisional Revolutionary Government and the Central Committee of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation have recently held a grand ceremony in a liberated area of South Viet Nam to send off Nguyen Huu Tho, President of the Presidium of the NFL Central Committee and President of the Advisory Council of the RSVN PRG who left for Algiers to attend the 4th Non-Aligned Summit Conference to be held early September.

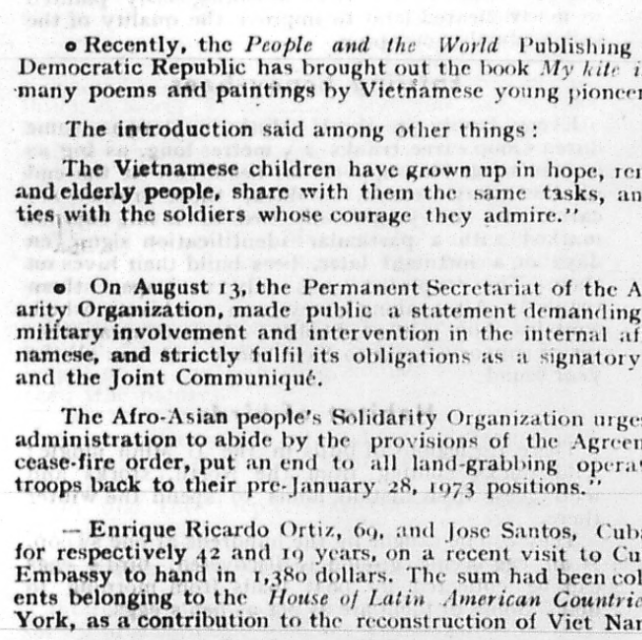
Taking part in the PRG delegation headed by President Nguyen Huu Tho are Nguyen Thi Binh, Minister for Foreign Affairs; Nguyen Van Hieu, Minister; Hoang Bich Son, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs; ambassadors of the RSVN in a number of countries and high-ranking officials and experts of the PRG Foreign Ministry.

Quang Tri and Bologna swear brotherhood

AN agreement on the assistance of the Italian people in Emilia Romagna to the people of Quang Tri province (South Viet Nam) for the rehabilitation and development of the latter's agriculture and fishery was signed recently in the Embassy of the Republic of South Viet Nam in Moscow.

Nguyen Sanh, Vice-Chairman of the People's Revolutionary Committee of Quang Tri province and Head of the delegation of the administration and people of Quang Tri province; and Ilario Brini, Chairman of Bologna province and Head of the delegation of the administration and people of the provinces and cities in Emilia Romagna, signed this agreement.

In the joint communiqué issued in this connection, the two delegations declared that they had agreed to establish brotherly relations between Quang Tri and Bologna provinces, and on other accords on the relations of friendship and solidarity and on economic and cultural assistance of the provinces and cities of Emilia Romagna to Quang Tri province to be signed in Italy in the nearest future.



Spontaneous collect for Viet Nam in GDR Xth Festival.

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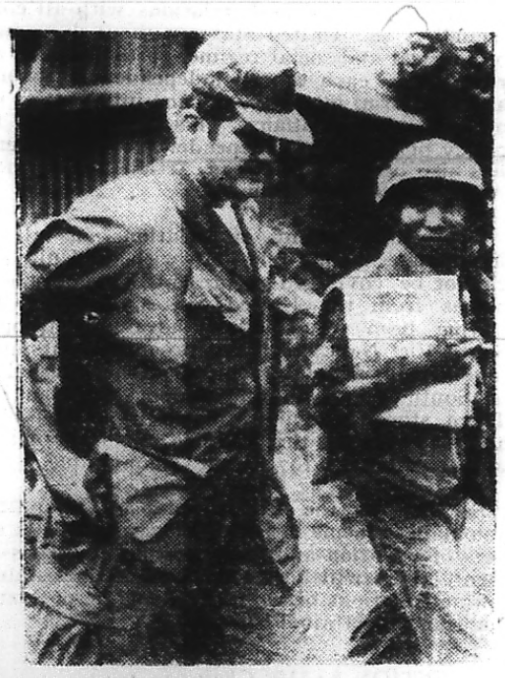
Cambodia

134,300 enemy put out of action



Lon Nol's army is teeming with US "advisors"

FROM late January (after the signing the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam) to mid-August, the PLAF of Kampuchea put out of action 134,300 enemy troops (killed, wounded, captured or defectors), according to *AKI*.

In addition, they took a toll of:

— 285 aircraft of various types downed, destroyed or damaged;

— 509 warships of different freights (ships loaded with food and war materials, lighters and tug-boats) sank, set afire or damaged;

— 32,105 firearms of all types.

202,000 civilians were liberated.

Between July 1st to August 15 only, while the US imperialists were fiercely stepping up their genocidal bombing raids in Cambodia, the PLAF of Kampuchea wiped out 36,000 mercenaries and seized 13,000 firearms of various kinds.

In close coordination with different battlefronts in the entire country, the PLAF in Phnom Penh and its surroundings, from late January to August 15, put out of combat 70,000 men of the Phnom Penh mercenary army, seized over 15,000 weapons of various types, destroyed thousands of tons of war means.

They blotted out hundreds of enemy positions and a series of self-defence village networks, smashing all the lines of defence of Phnom Penh city.

Over 100,000 inhabitants, freed from the grip of the traitors Lon Nol, Sirik Matak, Son Ngoc Thanh, In Tam, Socthene Fernandez, now live in complete security in the liberated zone.

Through this overwhelming assault on the last hide-out of the traitors, the Cambodian people and PLAF have foiled R. Nixon's "Khmerization of the war" and "Americanization of the air war" plan and enlarged the liberated zone which extends in a stretch from North to South and from East to West.

SOUTH VIET NAM CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE SOUTH VIET NAM NATIONAL FRONT FOR LIBERATION